(b) whether it is also a fact that the profit of the companies engaged in the trading of foodgrains in India is also increasing like wise; and

(c) if so, whether there is any plan to check the exploitation of the consumers by these companies and for their relief?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) to (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Record output of foodgrains

2078.SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a record foodgrain output this year;

(b) if so, what is the total output of foodgrains recorded during 2007-08;

(c) whether Government has decided to set aside 2 million tonnes of wheat to meet export requests;

(d) whether rising consumption would make India an importer of sugar;

(e) if so, whether Government has decided not to release orders of export of sugar from now; and

(f) if so, whether India would be able to meet foodgrain shortage which had caused great resentment during last year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) As per 4th Advance Estimate of the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation released on 9.7.2008, the country registered record production of 215.56 million tonnes of foodgrains (rice, wheat and coarsegrains).

(c) In view of comfortable situation of wheat stock in Central Pool, it has been decided to allow export of upto 20 lakh tonnes of wheat from Central Pool, on diplomatic basis to friendly countries. The Ministry of External Affairs will make payment to FCI, at economic cost.

(d) The consumption of sugar has been rising with rise in population and income levels whereas production of sugar in the country is cyclic in nature. Two to three years of high production are followed by two-to-three years of low production. The import of sugar, in the years of low production of sugar depend upon the production level likely to be achieved in the sugar season and the stocks available in the country at that time.

(e) The Central Government, *vide* notification dated 31.07.2007 has dispensed with the requirement of obtaining a release order for export of sugar upto 30.09.2008 which has now been extended upto 31.12.2008 or till further orders, whichever is earlier in case of exports under Open General License (O.G.L.) and till further orders in case of exports under Advance Authorization Scheme.

(f) The demand and supply projection of wheat for 2008-09 and 2009-10 are as under:-

(In million tonnes)

Year	Demand	Supply
2008-09	72.72	75.67
2009-10	74.26	76.45

As per these projections, the requirement of wheat can be met from the domestic resources.

Strengthening of the PDS

2079.SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had decided to include pulses and some more foodgrains in the Public Distribution System (PDS);

(b) if so, the facts and details thereof;

(c) whether Government also proposes to strengthen the Public Distribution System and remove the bottlenecks prevailing in the system throughout the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether Government has discussed the matter with the State Governments; and

(f) if so, the reaction of the State Governments in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) to (f) Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) focused on Below Poverty Line Families has been under implementation since June, 1997. As a segment of TPDS, for better targeting of food subsidy at the poorest of the BPL families, Antyodaya Anna Yojana has been under implementation since December, 2000. TPDS is operated under joint responsibility of Government of India and State Governments & UT Administrations. For successful implementation of TPDS, responsibilities are shared by Government of India and State & UT Governments. To facilitate smooth functioning of TPDS and to ensure that foodgrains allocated by Govt. of India to States and UTs are distributed properly to targeted BPL and AAY families, the required legal framework and regulatory mechanisms have been put in place. Apart from the provisions under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955, Public Distribution (Control) Order, 2001 has been issued by Central Govt. in August, 2001. This frame work enables the States and UT Governments to take all required action to ensure proper functioning of TPDS.

To streamline functioning of TPDS, Government has taken a series of measures.

Apart from regular monitoring and review with State & UT Governments, the functioning of TPDS has also been evaluated from time to time through independent agencies by the Government